

TRANSMITTAL # 10

MEMORANDUM

April 8, 2009

TO: Workforce Development Council

FROM: Roger B. Madsen, Director

Roger B Madsen

SUBJECT: Wagner-Peyser Funding

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve Wagner-Peyser Stimulus spending strategies

BACKGROUND:

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the Idaho Department of Labor will receive \$3,586,589 in additional Wagner-Peyser funding, of which one-third (\$1,344,971) is designated for additional Employment Services (ES) and two-thirds (\$2,241,618) is designated for Re-Employment Services (RES).

While ES funds are to assist all job seeker and employer customers with labor-exchange activities, RES funds are specifically intended to assist those receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits gain employment.

During the last fiscal year Idaho received \$6.4 million in federal Wagner-Peyser funding and anticipates a similar amount in base Wagner-Peyser funding for the coming fiscal year. In addition, the department supplements Wagner-Peyser funds by approximately \$2.5 to \$3 million a year with state Administrative Tax funds. These resources are critical to maintaining employment services in our 25 local offices throughout the state, allowing flexibility in state responses to major layoffs or to assist in recruiting major businesses to the state. The department will continue to reallocate Wagner-Peyser and State Administrative Tax funds among regions throughout the state as appropriate to address these emergencies and opportunities.

Proposed ES Spending Strategies:

The department recommends using ES stimulus funds (\$1,344,971) for the following priorities:

- Expand business outreach – Increase capacity for effective outreach to business customers as part of the ongoing Regional workforce planning strategies. Outcomes will include increased job opportunities for job seekers, increased job listings in *Idaho Works*, increased use of department business services, enhanced long term relations with business customers, and enhanced effectiveness of regional sector strategy activities. Staff will receive training on business

outreach techniques, sales and marketing of services, and how to more effectively work with industry sectors prioritized by the regional planning process.

- Expand access to automated services – Provide the Career Information System (CIS) and *IdahoWorks* automated workforce services through local libraries statewide, expanding access and promoting workforce services throughout the state and with people who lack Internet services at home. Designated department staff will work to coordinate and train library personnel as well as train department staff on how to use CIS and *IdahoWorks* more effectively with their customers.
- Develop training materials for customers on how to access automated services more effectively – Develop self-directed and self-paced automated tools that provide job seeking and business customers with an orientation to department services and the basics of using these services. This will enhance current capacity as well as future capacity to serve customers more efficiently. Examples would be online or automated tutorials about the basics of filing an Unemployment Insurance claim, how to conduct an effective job search, how to list jobs effectively, how to use the online searchable profile tool and how to attach a resume to a job application.
- Improved Labor Market Information – Provide resources (\$30,000) to enhance the Idaho Business Directory by assuring information provided meets new federal disclosure requirements.
- Continue services to people with disabilities – Assure continued federal funding for the Disability Navigator program by matching \$134,000 from stimulus funds to continue efforts to assist people with disabilities obtain appropriate workforce services. *(Note: These funds will come from the Governor's 10 Percent Reserve for ARRA Employment Services, see Transmittal #11.)*

Proposed RES Spending Strategies:

The department recommends using RES stimulus funds (\$2,241,618) for the following priorities:

- Expand current RES services – Increase staffing statewide to dramatically expand current one-on-one re-employment services provided to Unemployment Insurance claimants identified as likely to exhaust their benefits.
- Expand event capacity – Increase Local Office capacity to deliver more and expanded job search workshops, job fairs, and other events to assist Unemployment Insurance claimants obtain employment.
- Expand services to veterans – Provide additional staffing resources (\$224,000) to target additional one-on-one employment services to veterans who are receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits. *(Note: These funds will come from the Governor's 10 Percent Reserve for Reemployment Services, see Transmittal #11.)*

Staff Recommendation:

The staff recommends adoption of the proposed Wagner-Peyser stimulus spending strategy.

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